

March 25, 1974

Mr. Howard Klein  
Rockefeller Foundation Arts Program  
111 West 50th Street  
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Klein,

As you may recall, about one year ago the Experimental Television Center proposed to the Rockefeller Foundation Arts Program the development of a series, "The Archive of Senior American Composers" in collaboration with Nam June Paik. At the time the Center was a not-for-profit educational corporation but did not have the Federal Tax Exemption status required by most foundations. On June 20, 1973 the Center was notified that the Tax Exemption status under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code was approved.

With the assistance of the New York State Council on the Arts the Center has supported the development of video art. Through our program 1/2" video equipment, including a Paik-Abe Color Video Synthesizer, is available to any interested artist from around the state. The program is purposely designed to involve individuals who are already accomplished in the field of video art as well as those who have had little experience. The artist schedules a work period at the Center, usually between 3 and 6 days, designs his project and operates all equipment. The staff does not produce tapes for these people; we serve as a technical resource for training in and use of equipment. We feel that it is imperative that a production space exist where each artist can work directly with the equipment at his own pace at any time during the several days of his stay. The Center is not a large operation, and we feel that this is one reason for the success of our program. We can be flexible with our schedule, adapting to the individual needs of each artist who works here.

The Center also conducts workshops for various groups around the state who have a concern with video as an art form. In this area, we work quite closely with people involved in education. The content of each workshop is structured around the interests of the group and their knowledge of 1/2" video; activities may include equipment operation, discussions, tape showing or performances, all as they relate to video art. We are also in the process of developing a curriculum for the teaching/learning of video art. We hope to be able to implement this curriculum in a degree program with a specialization in video art at

the State University of New York at Binghamton or another university in the state system or at a private college or university. The enclosed information will give you an indication of our involvements in the past year.

We are applying to the Rockefeller Foundation for support in the form of equipment to expand the capability of the Paik-Abe Synthesizer and to standardize the quality of tapes produced at the Center. The color facility available consists of the Paik-Abe and a 1/2" EIAJ standard editing system with one Panasonic 3110 and one Panasonic 3130. We are planning to complete a synthesizer designed by Mr. Walter Wright, the artist in residence at the Center. Dave Jones, resident technician, is currently involved in the research and development of a controlled gray level colorizer.

At the present time, the Center has no control equipment; this equipment is necessary to insure that the technical quality of the tapes produced at the Center is high enough to permit the artist to distribute them to galleries, museums, cable companies and educational television stations. Presently we have no accurate method of determining the color output of the Synthesizer; all color tapes produced at the Center are "monitored" on a Trinitron receiver through RF modulation. The imprecision of this method makes it difficult for the artist to know which colors are actually recorded. In addition, the Paik-Abe uses a rescan system to mix prerecorded material; this is another part of the system which may adversely affect the quality of the final product. The Tektronix Signal Generator requested from the Foundation would allow us to set up machines according to standard color and to mix prerecorded and live camera information with no loss of image quality.

The Center has also requested color cameras which would increase the range of possibilities of the Paik-Abe. An increasing number of artists from all over the state with increasingly sophisticated knowledge are requesting access to precise and versatile 1/2" color systems. The Center would like to provide a studio space which is equal to these demands, in order to further the exploration and development of video as an art.

Our major source of financial support presently comes from the New York State Council on the Arts. The limitations of our budget prohibit the purchase of this necessary equipment. We submitted a proposal to the National Endowment for the Arts Public Media Program for the purchase of control equipment and other hardware which would augment our present systems and for minimal monetary support for artists who would like to work at the Center. The request was not accepted. I hope that

the Rockefeller Foundation can assist the Center in helping to provide the artist with access to the machines necessary to his art. If you have any questions or would like further information, please call me.

Sincerely,

Ralph Hocking  
President

RH/sm